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Annual report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund to the Economic and Social Council

Note by the Secretariat

1. In its decision 2000/4 of 3 February 2000, the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) requested the Executive Director to transmit the document entitled "Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/2000/4 (Part I) and Corr.1-3), together with the comments made by delegations at the first regular session of the Board, to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 2000. The Executive Board welcomed the statement of the Executive Director that, in accordance with Council resolution 1998/27 of 28 July 1998, a concise, consolidated list of issues that were central to the improved coordination of related operational activities would be provided to the Council.

2. Part one of the present document contains the annual report of the Executive Director. Part two contains the summary of deliberations of the Executive Board on the annual report of the Executive Director.

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Part one
Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council*

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review	1–71	3
	A. Structures and mechanisms	1–8	3
	B. Funding and resources	9–16	4
	C. Resident coordinator system	17–22	5
	D. Implementation of the Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework	23–28	5
	E. Harmonization of programmes and procedures	29–32	6
	F. Gender mainstreaming	33–42	7
	G. Gender balance	43–47	8
	H. Capacity-building	48–53	8
	I. Common premises and services	54–58	9
	J. Cooperation with the World Bank	59–65	10
	K. Monitoring and evaluation	66–71	11
II.	Follow-up to international conferences	72–84	11
	A. Problems and lessons learned	80–83	13
	B. Recommendations	84	13
III.	Humanitarian and disaster relief assistance	85–99	14
	A. Recommendations	99	16

* Originally issued as document E/ICEF/2000/4 (Part I) and Corr.1-3.

I. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

A. Structures and mechanisms

1. Over the past few years, several initiatives for improving the operational activities of the United Nations have converged. The general direction and context for collaboration among United Nations funds and programmes have been established by General Assembly resolution 53/192 of 15 December 1998 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system; the latest triennial comprehensive policy review; and the reform proposals of the Secretary-General. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG), with the full and active participation of UNICEF, has led the development of mechanisms for enhancing collaboration and improving coordination of operational activities in the field.

2. The effectiveness of these efforts will be judged by concrete results delivered at the country level, more effective programmes and timely delivery, under the overall leadership of national authorities. To this end, UNICEF will participate actively in the evaluation of the impact of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), as called for in paragraph 63 of resolution 53/192.

3. While the UNDG was established as a structure for the United Nations funds and programmes, specialized agencies now participate as observers. Since the specialized agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions are an integral part of the United Nations country team, many of the issues considered by the UNDG have led to further discussion system-wide, with subsequent incorporation into the collaborative structures of the Administrative Committee on Coordination machinery. The role of the Executive Committees now extends well beyond that originally envisaged.

4. The early operations of the UNDG were characterized by the rapid establishment of working groups. With active participation by heads of funds and programmes and the support of a permanent secretariat, the UNDG took timely and important action on many issues. As decisions became operationalized, with the field assuming responsibility for implementation, the UNDG has made provision for the phasing out of working groups, unless there is a clear rationale for their continued operation. The UNDG will make more use of ad hoc groups, with the Support Group responsible for monitoring and follow-up.

Problems and lessons learned

5. Through its leadership on several major initiatives — the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UNDAF, common premises and the resident coordinator system — the UNDG has had positive effects on the entire United Nations system. While all United Nations agencies have cooperated fully and actively through the Administrative Committee on Coordination machinery and as members of the country team, there was initially a sense that actions by the UNDG could pre-empt decisions of the broader system. To eliminate this possibility, the UNDG now involves external partners in work on new initiatives from the earliest stages, and regularly briefs the full Administrative Committee on Coordination machinery.

6. The UNDG subgroup structure has led to some consolidation of system-wide subgroups. Thus, the UNDG Subgroup on Training has assumed leadership on training issues, allowing for termination of a Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions Working Group. Leadership for the development and implementation of the Secretary-General's Ten-Year Programme on Girls' Education was delegated to UNICEF, working through the UNDG structure. This eliminated the need for a separate, system-wide group to bring together the relevant agencies.

7. Since field representatives are responsible for implementation of mechanisms and procedures developed by the UNDG, regular monitoring and follow-up are required to ensure sustained compliance, as well as a constant exchange of information on good practices and new developments. In addition to the issuance of regular executive directives, UNICEF has placed reform and UNDG issues on the agenda of all regional meetings. Country teams must be directly involved in the development of all mechanisms and procedures to ensure that new developments are practical and realistic.

Recommendations

8. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the work accomplished to date and encourage the funds and programmes to continue their implementation of triennial comprehensive policy review recommendations;

(b) *Encourage* the funds and programmes to keep Member States apprised of developments related to UNDG activities;

(c) *Reaffirm* the importance of evaluation of the programmatic impact of the CCA/UNDAF mechanisms;

(d) *Reaffirm* the need for continued, close cooperation between UNDG members and the rest of the Administrative Committee on Coordination system.

B. Funding and resources

9. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/59 of 24 July 1997, the UNICEF Executive Board adopted a resource mobilization strategy (decision 1999/8, E/ICEF/1999/7/Rev.1) in support of the role of UNICEF as the lead United Nations agency for children. The approved strategy aims to increase contributions to core resources and make them predictable and assured, while promoting increased burden sharing among donor Governments. The strategy proposes an annual pledging session to facilitate the shared intergovernmental responsibility for resource mobilization. The first such session is scheduled for the Executive Board first regular session of 2000.

10. The resource mobilization strategy, together with the medium-term plan (MTP), the biennial support budget, country programmes and a results-oriented annual report of the Executive Director, comprise the building blocks for the multi-year funding framework (MYFF). The MYFF, now being refined in consultation with the Executive Board, conceptually integrates UNICEF organizational priorities and major areas of action, resources, budget and outcomes. It is an item on the agenda of the first regular session of the UNICEF Executive Board in 2000.

11. The Executive Board, in its decision 1999/8, endorsed a target of 7 per cent in annual income growth, to reach $1.5 billion by 2005, as a challenge for the mobilization of regular and other resources from donors. Total UNICEF income in 1998 was $966 million, well above the 1998 MTP projection, and $64 million more than total income in 1997 — an increase of 7 per cent. Of this total, 62 per cent was from Governments, 33 per cent from the private sector and 5 per cent from other income. Based on these results and current 1999 funding projections, the targeted annual income growth rate of 7 per cent appears valid.

12. In addition to the traditional resource mobilization activities, UNICEF has expanded its partnerships with key institutions and new actors. A renewed and reinvigorated partnership with the World Bank now complements resource mobilization activities with Governments. Increased cooperation with the European Union is particularly important. UNICEF also receives significant funding for emergency programmes from the European Commission Humanitarian Office.

13. An example of an innovative partnership, UNICEF collaboration with the United Nations Foundation has resulted in significant funding being allocated to such priority programme areas as health, the expanded programme on immunization, HIV/AIDS and girls' education. UNICEF is also working closely with the new Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation regarding its prospective, significant support for vaccines and immunization over a five-year period, linked to the creation of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization.

Problems and lessons learned

14. Core resources are the foundation of UNICEF country programmes and the backbone of multilateral assistance. Nevertheless, additional resources are critical for expanding the reach of country programmes and ensuring the capacity to deliver critical assistance to children, as well as supporting the demands for UNICEF intervention in humanitarian crises.

15. The UNICEF funding base is unique within the United Nations system, with a large share of contributions from the private sector, particularly through the National Committees for UNICEF. This broad range of funding sources requires constant

development of new, diverse and proactive skills and methods of resource mobilization.

Recommendations

16. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Note* the progress achieved in refining the UNICEF results-based approach to programming, through the articulation of the MYFF;

(b) *Call upon* Member States to support the successful implementation of the UNICEF resource mobilization strategy with a view to increasing resources, making general resources more assured and predictable and improving burden-sharing;

(c) *Make recommendations* on the future of the United Nations pledging conference, taking into account the decision of the UNICEF Executive Board to introduce an annual pledging session within the context of Executive Board meetings.

C. Resident coordinator system

17. The UNDG has given high priority to strengthening and improving the resident coordinator system. UNICEF currently has three staff serving as resident coordinators, two of whom are women; a further three are being considered for posts, and a further five are scheduled to complete the competency assessment exercise prior to the end of the year.

18. The Executive Director has written to all staff, stressing the importance of resident coordinator posts as part of a UNICEF career path and urging qualified candidates to apply. Nevertheless, the number of resident coordinators from outside the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) remains disappointingly low, less than 20 per cent of the total. UNICEF is urging that the UNDG continue its review of the modalities of secondment to identify and rectify those issues that currently detract from attracting external candidates.

19. During the past year, the UNDG completed a job description for resident coordinators and revised guidelines for reporting. UNICEF is encouraging that work plans and associated budgets for coordination be developed with the full participation and agreement of the country team, to ensure transparency and team ownership.

20. The Executive Director has instructed all UNICEF representatives to have in their personal work plans activities that relate to their responsibilities as members of the country team; this forms part of annual performance appraisals. As part of annual reporting requirements, UNICEF representatives must also assess the functioning of the United Nations team, including the availability of a work plan, budget and annual report.

Problems and lessons learned

21. While the competency assessment exercise has proven a useful tool in the revised selection process for resident coordinators, its current cost of some $10,000 per candidate is sufficiently high to hold back universal application. It is proposed that the exercise be reviewed to enhance its utility.

Recommendations

22. The Council may wish to call to the attention of the General Assembly:

(a) The need for a broadly based pool of resident coordinators with improved gender balance;

(b) The important role of the annual report and work plan of the resident coordinator and the need for a fully consultative process in their preparation.

D. Implementation of the Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework

23. UNICEF has continued to lead the UNDG Subgroup on Programme Policy, furthering the CCA/UNDAF process. With final guidelines prepared in April 1999, the roll-out beyond the pilot phase has moved quickly. An Administrative Committee on Coordination guidance note on CCA/UNDAF was circulated to all agencies and to all duty stations. The UNDG has initiated a series of one-day workshops with United Nations partners at their respective headquarters, and a CCA/UNDAF Learning Network has been established.

24. By the end of August 1999, country teams in 106 programme countries were directly involved in the CCA exercise. With 32 completed CCAs, 57 ongoing and 17 planned, some 80 per cent of countries are

expected to have a CCA before the end of the year 2000. Acceptance by Governments has been high, with active involvement of officials in almost all countries. The CCA is rapidly gaining favour as the single essential database for all United Nations system partners, with considerable interest shown by bilateral agencies. The UNDAF roll-out has now extended to 20 countries, with another 42 expected by the end of the year 2000.

25. In terms of the broader programme processes, action has been taken on two main fronts. First, the country programme preparation process can be simplified and shortened to take into account the role of the CCA and UNDAF in setting the strategic framework for UNICEF country programmes. Country notes presented to the Executive Board will clearly indicate the linkages between the envisaged UNICEF-assisted programme of cooperation and the goals and strategic priorities set forth in the UNDAF. Second, there has been a revision of programme preparation guidelines to reflect linkages between the UNICEF situation analysis and the CCA/UNDAF process.

26. The guidelines for the process have been endorsed by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and were the subject of a guidance note from the Committee to all agencies.

Problems and lessons learned

27. The global support mechanisms provided during the pilot phase, in which country offices received support from headquarters facilitators, has proven to be of tremendous value. UNICEF has recommended to the UNDG that these be re-established to support countries undertaking the process in the 2000-2001 period.

Recommendations

28. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the progress on implementation of the CCA/UNDAF process and urge funds and programmes to continue to review their programming processes, with a view to streamlining and simplification;

(b) *Reaffirm* the lead role of Governments and urge all United Nations system partners to participate actively in the CCA/UNDAF process;

(c) *Urge* that there be maximum compatibility between the UNDAF and instruments of the World Bank, such as the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) and the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF).

E. Harmonization of programmes and procedures

29. By 2001, UNICEF programme cycles will be harmonized with those of other agencies in over 90 countries where harmonization represents a realistic and desirable objective. To ensure harmonization of cycles, seven countries presented recommendations to the Executive Board in 1999 to extend current country programmes by one or two years, and a smaller number will do so in 2000; in several other cases, ongoing programmes will be shortened and new programmes developed earlier.

Problems and lessons learned

30. Experience has shown that sustained harmonization of country programme cycles requires monitoring and reinforcement. The UNDG now includes the monitoring of harmonized cycles in its work plan. Harmonization efforts have resulted in a significant increase in the number of countries whose current, extended or curtailed programmes will now end in 2001 and which will start new programmes in 2002. This represents a major challenge to the regional and headquarters support functions and may call for a temporary reallocation of staff resources.

31. UNICEF continues to explore ways in which existing procedures and practices can be harmonized or simplified, particularly to reduce the burden on country offices and national counterparts, while ensuring appropriate levels of accountability and quality. Areas of particular attention include: simplification of documentation required for collaborative programming activities; streamlining of reporting requirements; and efforts to coordinate in-country mid-term reviews.

Recommendations

32. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the high degree of harmonization achieved by UNDG members;

(b) *Request* UNDG agencies to continue monitoring the harmonization of country programmes.

F. Gender mainstreaming

33. UNICEF policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, approved by the Executive Board in decision 1994/A/4 (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1), calls for a shift from a "women-in-development" approach to a "gender" approach. This requires the integration of gender concerns as a cross-cutting theme in country programmes and the promotion of gender equality in national development programmes, by adopting a life cycle perspective and giving special attention to the girl child. This overall framework is strengthened by the commitments undertaken at the global conferences, in particular the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Problems and lessons learned

34. The lack of data disaggregated by age and sex and the limited analysis of the social factors that determine gender relations have affected the full mainstreaming in country programmes. The integration of components on gender equality in the entire range of learning situations for boys and girls will be fundamental to responsible life decisions. Advocacy tools and programme interventions require promotion of learning that is oriented to the development of gender equality from early childhood. Gender issues are recognized as critical in addressing the information and participation rights of adolescents and their efforts as change agents acting to address responsibly such issues as early marriage, female genital mutilation, exploitation, HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence.

35. While the ultimate responsibility for gender mainstreaming at the country level rests with country representatives, gender focal points are to act as catalysts, advocates and change agents. Many of these focal points have other responsibilities, which can affect their level of support to gender mainstreaming. In addition, enhanced institutional mechanisms will improve sustainability and monitoring of the gains achieved in mainstreaming gender.

Achievements

36. In 1996, of the 40 country notes and subsequent CPRs submitted to the Executive Board, 33 included gender equality as a goal. The UNICEF strategies for water and environmental sanitation, basic education, health and children in need of special protection increasingly emphasize the integration of gender concerns. This is now reflected in programme guidance materials developed for each of the main sectors.

37. Increased attention is being given to improving the access and quality of services to girls and women, increasing women's participation in the management of services, and promoting special measures to protect the rights of girls and women. Capacity-building for staff and counterparts has been used as a major strategy for mainstreaming gender. This has entailed the development of a gender training package and programme guidance materials for gender mainstreaming; the designation of staff members in regional and country offices to serve as gender focal points, providing them with necessary competence; and the training of more than 1,250 staff and 9,500 national counterparts. This has further included the training of peacekeepers and management personnel to promote behavioural change and communication for gender equality in emergency situations.

38. Gender focal point networks have been established in all regions, with the internal UNICEF network currently comprising 95 gender focal points. Regional networks meet at least once a year to identify priorities, share strategic knowledge, review progress and constraints and plan the implementation of joint actions.

39. *Gender Mainstreaming: A Guide for UNICEF-Assisted Programmes* outlines steps to be taken to ensure attention to gender issues at the different stages of the country programme. The draft version will be tested in selected countries during 1999 and 2000. Based on experiences of country programmes, a set of 20 best practices in gender mainstreaming and special initiatives for women and girls has been completed. These documents will be distributed widely within UNICEF and shared with national counterparts and the United Nations system.

40. UNICEF is closely involved with the United Nations inter-agency campaigns regarding the issue of violence against women and girls. The "Meena" and "Sara" initiatives in South Asia and Africa are popular with girls and aim to empower them with knowledge about their rights and to change community attitudes. A regional programme in under way for the elimination of female genital mutilation in Eastern and Southern Africa (in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya and Somalia) and in

many countries in West Africa, including Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Senegal. UNICEF has supported the efforts of Governments, the Inter-African Committee on Ending Harmful Practices and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in mobilizing support for the Organization of African Unity Declaration on Violence against Women, adopted at the Organization's summit in June 1998.

41. The ongoing work of the Education for All (EFA) 2000 Assessment, which requires gender disaggregation of data, is an important step that is supported by UNICEF and the three other partners from the World Conference on Education for All. UNICEF input to the process emphasizes the need for greater attention to gender socialization and the promotion of gender equality in the educational process throughout the life cycle.

42. The CCA and UNDAF provide the opportunity to reinforce and support the mainstreaming of gender. The initial success of theme groups on gender indicates that UNICEF capacity-building efforts in these countries have assisted in the mainstreaming of gender in the UNDAF process. At the global level, UNICEF is a current co-chair of the UNDG Subgroup on Gender.

G. Gender balance

43. The Executive Director fully supports the goal of increasing the representation of women in professional posts to 50 per cent by the year 2000. High priority is placed on identifying and appointing qualified women candidates at all levels and, through these efforts, improving the imbalance in the ratio of male and female staff in the professional category. The following efforts are currently in place:

(a) Selected recruitment campaigns for women candidates through country and regional recruitment missions targeted at developing countries for senior — and middle-level professional positions;

(b) The establishment of a roster of external women candidates.

Problems and lessons learned

44. The internal monitoring of the targets set for gender balance shows consistent and sustained progress towards the targets set, although the organizational structure continues to be a pyramid, with more women than men at the P-1 and P-2 levels, slightly fewer women than men at the P-3 level, and a gradual decrease in women from the P-3 level upwards.

45. The commitment of senior management continues to be essential to achieve gender balance, as does enforcement of mechanisms to monitor supervisors' performance in recruiting and promoting fully qualified women. Nevertheless, as more women attain senior positions, a new challenge arises in retaining them in those positions. Female staff are leaving UNICEF at a higher rate than in the past (as of March 1999, an increase of 15 per cent over the previous 18-month period).

Achievements

46. As of October 1999, 32 per cent of UNICEF representatives and 33 per cent of assistant representatives were women. In all senior positions, the percentage of women has increased. At present, 21.4 per cent of D-2 posts are held by women (compared to 16 per cent in 1990); 28.8 per cent of D-1/L-6 posts (compared to 15.4 per cent in 1990); and 33.3 per cent of P-5/L-5 posts (compared to 25.1 per cent in 1990). Thirty-three per cent of the directors at headquarters are women (compared to 20 per cent in 1990); 33.3 per cent of the deputy regional directors (compared to 0 per cent in 1990); and 40 per cent of the deputy directors at headquarters (compared to 14.3 per cent in 1990).

Recommendations

47. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the lessons learned by UNICEF in the implementation of its gender balance policy, in particular in regard to the loss of women in mid-career;

(b) *Call for* further efforts to accelerate achievement of the institutional goals, taking into account the lessons learned by other United Nations entities.

H. Capacity-building

48. UNICEF is developing and testing mechanisms for improving the assessment, monitoring and evaluation of capacity-building in the field. A conceptual framework and a range of tools have been developed and reviewed and are in the process of being

tested in assessment/evaluation exercises in three countries (Brazil, Egypt and Uganda), with two more in negotiation. As a means of sharing best practices, 16 country offices are documenting case studies and experiences in a variety of programme contexts. UNICEF has joined with UNDP to organize a workshop in Harare, funded by the Department for International Development (DfID) (United Kingdom), to analyse country experiences and to distil elements of operational approaches and methodologies in planning and monitoring. In three countries in Africa, a regional community task force has carried out training on a programming approach to community capacity-building.

49. In a wide range of areas, UNICEF has produced materials or resources for global use, particularly for the knowledge/skills facet of national capacity-building, e.g., a training package for country offices to train their own staff and those of national partners in the management of monitoring and evaluation; and regional training exercises to support national reporting on global indicators through multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS).

Problems and lessons learned

50. There is demand at the field level for simple, practical guidance on tools and approaches to assessment, monitoring and evaluation in capacity-building. While there is a range of different approaches across the United Nations system and among other international partners, there is much common ground in conceptual frameworks and much to be gained in further sharing of methods and tools.

51. Approaches to evaluation of capacity-building must be guided by clear, common conceptual frameworks but must also be flexible and process-oriented. This is necessary to foster self-assessment, learning capacity and broader programme ownership; to allow for effective dialogue among key national-level stakeholders, including less powerful groups; to promote deeper analysis of issues related to national and programme contexts; and to turn evaluation itself into a capacity-building process.

52. UNICEF will continue work in distilling lessons from experience and developing methodologies and tools for assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation of capacity-building, and will also continue informal exchanges with partner organizations.

Recommendations

53. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Encourage* the sharing of case studies and evaluations of capacity-building experiences, including frameworks and methodologies;

(b) *Encourage* forums for wider exchange and analysis of capacity-building approaches at the inter-agency level;

(c) *Encourage* an emphasis on evaluation as a learning and capacity-building process in general, but particularly where evaluation touches on capacity-building strategies.

I. Common premises and services

54. UNICEF chaired the UNDG Subgroup on Common Premises and Services until mid-1999. At that time, the subgroup had undertaken eight evaluation missions to assess the potential for creating new and cost-effective United Nations Houses. The subgroup, in cooperation with country teams, was successful in establishing United Nations Houses in Belgium, Belize, Latvia, Moldova, Pakistan and Ukraine. Two additional United Nations Houses, in Ecuador and Trinidad and Tobago, are on target for completion by the end of 1999.

55. The UNICEF Executive Board had approved a Capital Asset Fund in the early 1990s. At their respective September 1999 Executive Board sessions, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP) made identical presentations and received approval for capital reserves. These funds will provide further impetus to the ongoing process of establishing a unified United Nations presence at the country level through development of United Nations Houses and common services arrangements.

56. A system-wide common services survey was initiated in February 1999. Currently, an in-depth analysis of the data received from the country offices is being undertaken. Upon review of the information, a workshop will be held for operations managers of participating agencies. The objective of the workshop, scheduled for late January 2000, will be to develop a set of preliminary guidelines to provide support for country offices in the establishment and management of common services arrangements. This project,

financed by a major donor, has seen consistent progress; implementation of lessons learned is expected next year.

Problems and lessons learned

57. While progress has been good, it is now recognized that implementation of the most promising United Nations House projects has been completed and substantial up-front, one-time costs may be required for future premises. In countries with large programmes, there can be difficulty in identifying prospective accommodations; space requirements strictly limit the number of properties available and decrease leverage in negotiations. There are significant risks involved with build-to-suit construction projects on land provided by the Government. Ideally, a Government provides rent-free premises in existing buildings. With availability of newly approved Capital Asset Funds for the core UNDG agencies, a steady, if not accelerated, pace for implementation and inauguration of additional United Nations Houses should be anticipated for the 2000-2001 biennium.

Recommendations

58. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the approach to common premises and services, encourage further progress and reaffirm the requirements for shared management, transparency, accountability and cost-effectiveness.

J. Cooperation with the World Bank

59. UNICEF has expanded partnerships with the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly the World Bank, and increasingly with the regional development banks. Policy meetings between the World Bank and UNICEF, held twice a year, identify priority areas for collaboration. For the January 2000 meeting, the focus is on school health, HIV-AIDS, children and emergencies and the Roll Back Malaria programme.

60. An internal UNICEF interdivisional working group on Bretton Woods institutions monitors progress on collaboration, and UNICEF deputy regional directors serve as World Bank focal points for country initiatives. World Bank and UNICEF collaboration was discussed at three regional management meetings during 1999 and a repository was developed on country and sector partnerships. UNICEF has provided procurement services for Governments with World Bank International Development Association financing in several countries, including polio vaccine procurement for India. Increasingly, UNICEF is participating in World Bank training, including the Human Development Week and courses organized by the World Bank Institute. UNICEF is facilitating a panel on education for the Global Development Network Conference, 5-8 December 1999, in Bonn.

61. UNICEF has received funds from the World Bank Grants Development Facility for girls' education, child soldiers and emergency countries, and has assisted Governments with procurement services for both health and education supplies. The collaboration has focused on key priority issues of concern to both organizations, including psychosocial counselling, HIV/AIDS, youth and community re-integration within post-conflict countries, and child labour.

62. The World Bank CDF provides for greater cooperation at the country level in the 12 initial countries. The chair of the UNDG has sent guidelines on the CDF to field offices, and it is the subject of consultations between the United Nations and the World Bank, as well as between the Bank and the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The UNDG has established a United Nations system-World Bank Learning Group on the CDF, focusing on country-level experiences and involving system-wide participation.

63. As announced at the 1999 International Monetary Fund-World Bank annual meetings, the expanded Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative creates opportunities for policies and new social sector programmes benefiting children. UNICEF supports the World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategies to include measurable indicators to monitor progress. The collaboration of UNICEF and the World Bank has been an important, expanding partnership, with each organization identifying comparative advantages and sharing goals to increase social expenditures, attain 20/20 Initiative goals and provide benefits to the most marginalized children.

Problems and lessons learned

64. Although the overall relationship with the World Bank is growing stronger and deeper, operational collaboration could be facilitated with greater complementarity of financial rules and regulations.

Recommendations

65. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of and encourage efforts of UNDG members to seek ways of strengthening collaboration with the World Bank;

(b) *Urge* that there be maximum compatibility between the CCA/UNDAF and the CDF.

K. Monitoring and evaluation

66. UNICEF has made considerable progress towards the MTP commitment of clearly differentiating between activities directed towards development results for children, to which UNICEF is one of many contributors, and its own performance. With respect to development results, UNICEF has joined with national partners, multilateral and bilateral agencies, academic institutions and other United Nations agencies to develop the MICS instruments and methodology, which will be used in over 60 countries to measure success in achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children.

67. With respect to UNICEF performance, the use of programme audit and self-assessment techniques has increased. Country programme management plans have provided the basis for a more systematic analysis of institutional performance. Office management plans have provided the basis for monitoring the performance of headquarters divisions and regional offices in the accomplishment of MTP objectives. Electronic networking and an improved newsletter and Web site are being used to expand dissemination of evaluation results. Consultations have taken place with United Nations and bilateral partners to share information and experiences.

68. Programmatically, UNICEF has increased support to national capacity-building for evaluation, particularly in Africa. The promotion of national evaluation associations has resulted in the creation of monitoring and evaluation networks and associations in some 20 countries, with development of appropriate training packages.

Problems and lessons learned

69. There is increasing demand for evidence of the direct results of UNICEF actions, while maintaining focus on high-level development outcomes and on strategic cross-cutting issues, the latter generally requiring active and close collaboration among Governments and other partners. The difficulty in establishing clear causal links between the actions of any one agent and the targeted development outcomes is leading to the notion of "shared attribution" and to the intensification of joint monitoring and evaluation activities.

70. The need to incorporate evaluation criteria into programmes at the design stage has led to development of an integrated monitoring and evaluation plan, reinforced by appropriate training.

Recommendations

71. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Request* the United Nations system to identify ways of accelerating system-wide collaboration for strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacity at the country level;

(b) *Request* all United Nations agencies to formulate plans to make their respective evaluation databases more accessible and to permit a smoother interface among them.

II. Follow-up to international conferences

72. The follow-up to international conferences and summits continues to be a high priority. UNICEF has participated actively in this process at three levels: (a) coordinated overall follow-up; (b) individual reviews (the five-year reviews of ICPD, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the World Summit for Social Development and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action) — and of the World Conference on Education for All and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session devoted to the fight against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities; and (c) follow-up to the World Summit for Children.

73. UNICEF country representatives have received the full range of materials prepared by the United Nations system and by UNICEF for implementing the goals and plans of action of the international conferences. These materials are to be used in the process of planning, programming and action at the country level within the context of system-wide follow-

up. This includes two Administrative Committee on Coordination guidance notes for the resident coordinator system on field-level follow-up, developed as frameworks for translating global goals into national-level policies and operational activities, and for using the comparative advantage of the respective agencies of the United Nations system to maximize the collective contribution. The UNDAF has become one of the main instruments for country-level follow-up of the global development agenda and includes the implementation of United Nations conferences, conventions and declarations. The objectives of the CCA include, *inter alia*, the detailing of information on the status of coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences and of the implementation of United Nations conventions and declarations. The CCA framework identifies indicators relating to development goals and objectives set forth in the plans of action.

74. As one of the original conveners of the World Conference on Education for All, UNICEF has remained a leader in the EFA Forum, housed in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank are currently leading a major international effort to assess EFA for the year 2000 review, including the support of Governments and regional conferences. At the global level, UNICEF is contributing to the EFA 2000 Assessment through its leadership in three key thematic studies: early childhood development, girls' education and education for the excluded.

75. With the decision of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and Further Initiatives, UNICEF has joined with its United Nations system partners and others in preparing a series of reports and proposals to the intergovernmental process for further action and initiatives to implement the outcome of the Summit. UNICEF is serving as lead agency for reporting on the 20/20 Initiative, working in close collaboration with the United Nations, UNDP, UNFPA, the World Bank, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other relevant organizations. UNICEF is participating actively in the preparation of several other papers, including, *inter alia*: progress on education since the World Conference on Education for All, progress on universal access to primary health care, and progress and strategies for reducing HIV/AIDS.

76. UNICEF has participated actively in the follow-up to the ICPD, including the NGO Forum in the Hague and the preparatory committees leading up to the five-year review of ICPD in June 1999. The Executive Board committed UNICEF repeatedly (1995-1998) to the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action in the following three areas: women's and girls' rights, girls' education, and women's health. However, the scope of the country programmes has been enlarged to cover:

(a) The reduction of maternal mortality rates by promoting essential obstetric care; information, education and communication; advocacy; and community-based support;

(b) Universal girls' education, as access to education is seen as a key to fulfilling the rights of girls and women;

(c) Elimination of violence against women and girls by combating such harmful traditional practices as early marriage and female genital mutilation, which have profound implications on the health of young girls;

(d) HIV-AIDS programmes aimed at reducing mother-to-child transmission and promotion of voluntary counselling and testing;

(e) Participation of adolescents, through life skills education and health promotion.

77. Recently at the global level, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, UNFPA and the World Bank made a joint statement on maternal mortality reduction. The statement provides an operational framework for a coordinated effort at country level through the UNDAF mechanism. The joint planning by Maternal Health Theme Groups, as suggested in the recent Coordinating Committee on Health, will help promote the ICPD Programme of Action. This process is being complemented by the development of universal standards for women-friendly health services, one of the results of a joint meeting in Mexico in January 1999.

78. Since the adoption in 1990 of the World Summit for Children Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, UNICEF has actively supported the implementation of the Plan of Action,

including organization of the mid-decade review in 1996. At that time, the General Assembly welcomed the significant progress made by most countries in achieving the majority of the mid-decade goals.

79. In resolution 51/186 of 16 December 1996, the General Assembly decided to convene a special session on follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001 to review achievements at the end of the decade, with UNICEF serving as secretariat. UNICEF will contribute to the process through MICS planned for 1999 and 2000; routine programme and thematic reviews at the national and regional levels; and the compilation and analysis of data. A final report by the Secretary-General will provide an overall assessment of progress achieved during the decade, including the lessons learned, an analysis of the main factors inhibiting progress and an overview of the remaining challenges.

A. Problems and lessons learned

80. While coordinated follow-up brings all United Nations activities under the overarching goal of poverty eradication, effective implementation and optimum results often require addressing topics and themes at a disagreggated level. Thus, individual conference follow-up, under a lead agency at the global level — and theme groups on appropriate topics at the country level — are essential. These must involve all stakeholders, particularly Governments, and an effective lead agency in order to ensure success. The most successful theme groups have been those with leadership of an agency with specialized capacity and technical comparative advantage in the relevant area, and group leaders who are knowledgeable, committed and have leadership skills. This approach can effectively link development at the local level with policies and actions at national and international levels.

81. Country teams need to avoid a proliferation of thematic groups and to review periodically the scope of their work. While thematic groups provide the cross-cutting element, agency leadership on individual conferences is also important in bringing specialized skills and comparative advantages to bear on issues. The development of a consistent set of indicators through the CCA process has proven invaluable in allowing for coordinated follow-up and meaningful assessment of progress.

82. Governments must play a leadership role in conference follow-up. The international conferences and declarations, as well as the guidelines and planning frameworks for follow-up, are prepared centrally. Therefore, the country team and the Government must work closely to ensure that implementation is country driven.

83. Successful follow-up to the range of global conferences requires appropriate political support. In particular, financial support has rarely matched the expectations created by conferences or the reliability and predictability required at the country level. In this regard, the 20/20 Initiative and enhanced HIPC process, directly linking debt relief with poverty reduction, are very positive recent developments.

B. Recommendations

84. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Note* the progress made in both the integrated follow-up to conferences and the coordinated conference-by-conference follow-up under appropriate lead agencies;

(b) *Re-emphasize* the need to link follow-up to individual conferences to the integrated follow-up to all conferences, taking fully into account the rights-based approach;

(c) *Re-emphasize* the use of theme groups, taking into account the need for cross-cutting themes and for leadership based on technical skills and comparative advantage;

(d) *Call upon* Governments to provide leadership for the follow-up to conferences, and for all stakeholders, including bilateral donors and the Bretton Woods institutions, to participate actively in the process;

(e) *Call for* the annual reports of the individual agencies, and of the resident coordinator, to take fully into account their respective roles in conference follow-up;

(f) *Re-emphasize* the importance of monitoring the achievement of all conferences goals;

(g) *Call upon* Member States to make available the resources necessary for the full implementation of conference plans of action and of UNDAFs, including

through innovative mechanisms such as the 20/20 Initiative and the enhanced HIPC process;

(h) *Call upon* Member States to participate actively in the regular reviews of the achievements of the global conferences and in all aspects of the preparatory process.

III. Humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

85. There are now more than 50 programme countries experiencing some form of crisis and requiring humanitarian and disaster relief assistance. Activities in this area have also extended into the political realm. At the country and regional levels as well as in intergovernmental forums, UNICEF advocates for children to be identified as an explicit priority in peace processes. At the Security Council's Open Briefing on the Protection of Civilians, UNICEF proposed a global Peace and Security Agenda for Children. This set of recommendations, reflecting the earlier UNICEF Anti-War Agenda and the Graça Machel study, address: the use of children as soldiers; protection of humanitarian assistance and humanitarian personnel; humanitarian mine action; protection of children from the effects of sanctions; the involvement of children in peace-building initiatives; punishment for war crimes against children; and early warning and preventative action for children. Additionally, UNICEF has focused on the link between the excessive proliferation of small arms and the use of children as soldiers.

86. In all its efforts, UNICEF is committed to finding joint strategies to deal not only with the humanitarian consequences of emergencies, but also with their root causes and solutions. UNICEF stresses a holistic approach which combines humanitarian relief with long-term development objectives — now reflected in the Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal Process.

87. UNICEF, as the United Nations focal point for mine awareness education, has led the development of *International Guidelines for Landmine and Unexploded Ordnance Awareness Education*, published in early 1999. In collaboration with strategic partners, efforts are also under way to develop specific training modules and provide technical support to capacity-building and advocacy efforts in countries and regions. In Kosovo, mine awareness programmes were rapidly put in place and provide a valuable basis for expanded mine awareness actions in other regions.

88. Addressing both internal displacement and gender, UNICEF, along with the Norwegian Refugee Council, has led an inter-agency process to develop training materials containing field practices, with an emphasis on the gender dimension. UNICEF also hosted a consultation on the gender dimensions of internal displacement, bringing together United Nations agencies, NGO partners and experts to provide input to training materials. UNICEF and WFP co-chair the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance, which was responsible for the preparation of a policy statement on the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance adopted by the Economic and Social Council as part of the agreed conclusions. UNICEF has also collaborated with the United Nations Department of Peace-Keeping Operations in incorporating child protection and gender issues, through technical support in training of military and civilian peacekeeping officials. A global database on internally displaced persons has been expanded in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council.

89. UNICEF has continued to make its Emergency Programme Fund more flexible to ensure rapid disbursement of funds to countries in emergency situations or in the wake of natural disasters. These funds have enabled UNICEF to initiate urgent actions to meet the critical survival and protection needs of children and women in such emergency situations as East Timor, Kosovo and Turkey.

90. Due to the increasing frequency of, and devastation cause by, natural disasters globally, UNICEF has embarked on an inter-agency effort to examine ways to enhance collective United Nations system preparedness and response to natural disasters. As part of the effort to increase UNICEF and joint-agency preparedness to respond effectively and in a timely manner in emergency situations, UNICEF has initiated an inter-agency process to develop a common approach to contingency planning.

91. In order to ensure children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation, during the Kosovo crisis UNICEF developed the "Child Friendly Spaces" concept, which provides an integrated set of mutually reinforcing services for children and mothers. The concept includes such integrated basic services as

baby care, pre-school and primary school, recreational activities, psychosocial and health counselling, basic health and nutrition education. This concept has since been used as a model for interventions following the earthquake in Turkey and crisis in East Timor.

92. Education has been widely recognized as a key element in emergency response, also providing a framework for psychosocial support. Re-establishment of educational opportunities provides an important bridge from immediate relief to rehabilitation and long-term development. UNICEF is cooperating closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNESCO in the area of education in emergencies, to develop a common policy framework.

93. In making its emergency response more consistent and effective, UNICEF has continued strengthening its organizational capacities and expanding strategic partnerships. Core corporate commitments focus on the following: an end to direct involvement of children in armed conflict; a decrease in the vulnerability of children at risk and mitigation of the impact of conflict on children; timely and effective provision of humanitarian assistance for children in crisis situations; and reduction of mine injuries among children through the promotion of universal ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction, and accelerated mine awareness programmes. DfID has generously provided supplementary funding for implementation of these activities over the next three years, through the strengthening of the UNICEF humanitarian response for children and women affected by armed conflict, civil strife and natural disasters.

94. Partnership development has become a high priority in humanitarian actions. The on-the-ground partnership of UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP has become a model for humanitarian collaboration among agencies in the United Nations system. Given the complexity of armed conflicts and humanitarian crises, a collaborative approach is the only way to provide effective protection of displaced women and children, and civilian populations at large. Through the development of strong linkages with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and its related procedural mechanisms, UNICEF is able to catalyse United Nations action in various areas that are directly related to the protection of — and assistance to — children in emergencies. UNICEF also continues to support the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict through country-level briefings, joint advocacy and logistical support during field missions.

95. Of particular concern is the erosion of respect for humanitarian personnel. United Nations staff are working under increasing threat to their personal security, from harassment to murder. Efforts to improve the security of staff have continued, with UNICEF providing additional training and equipment so that staff can cope with the lawlessness and violence that exist in crisis locations. Together with UNHCR and WFP, UNICEF has invested heavily in this area. The UNICEF Operations Centre, which provides immediate support to staff of UNICEF as well as other United Nations agencies, now operates 24 hours a day. UNICEF is also exploring joint ventures, such as shared operation of communications equipment in East Timor, Kosovo and West Africa.

96. Inter-agency collaboration on humanitarian and disaster relief activities has brought together the many diverse elements of the United Nations system: developmental, humanitarian, peacekeeping and political. This has been facilitated by joint meetings of the Executive Committees for Peace and Security and Humanitarian Activities with the UNDG.

97. In its cooperation with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, UNICEF seeks to ensure systematic inclusion of children's needs in all United Nations field operations that promote peace, implement peace agreements or resolve conflicts. Security Council-authorized operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone have presented the first case studies in which to explore this potential. UNICEF has collaborated in incorporating child protection and gender issues in United Nations field missions through technical support in the training of military and civilian peacekeeping officials.

98. There has been considerable emphasis on ensuring a coherent approach to relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. UNICEF has been active in preparing generic guidelines for the strategic framework approach. The UNDG is working to ensure that linkages exist between UNDAF and the Consolidated Appeal Process. UNDAF guidelines take into account the linkages between relief and

development, and several of the roll-out countries are special development situations.

A. Recommendations

99. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Call upon* Governments to do all in their power to protect United Nations staff and respect the privileges and immunities guaranteed under international law;

(b) *Encourage* further joint meetings of Executive Committees;

(c) *Reaffirm* the need for special protection measures for children in all efforts to promote peace, implement peace agreements and resolve conflicts.

Part two
Summary of the deliberations of the Executive Board on the annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council*

111. The Director, Office of United Nations Affairs and External Relations, introduced the Executive Director's annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/2000/4 (Part I) and Corr.1-3). He provided an update of activities that had occurred since completion of the report, and noted that a paper on outstanding issues would be prepared for the Economic and Social Council by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), with the full participation of UNICEF. This paper would also provide an update on United Nations reform.

112. Several delegations expressed their satisfaction with the content, structure and format of the report. There was a proposal by one delegation, with support from a number of others, that more information be provided on follow-up to international conferences and summits, particularly the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the International Conference on Education for All. The Director informed the Board that the next report would include more material on the role of UNICEF in follow-up to conferences and most likely would contain less information on reform issues, which could be covered in the UNDG consolidated list of issues and by such methods as the participation of country teams in joint meetings of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UNDP/UNFPA.

113. Responding to questions concerning support for country offices, the Director stated that an innovative component of support in the UNDAF/CCA process was a pool of 20 to 25 facilitators from the United Nations Secretariat, funds, programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions, who would be deployed at the request of country teams at critical times in the process. UNICEF had committed two staff members to this exercise. These facilitators would be available for up to four weeks per year and would wear "United Nations hats" while on assignment.

114. A number of delegations raised questions concerning the relationship of UNICEF to the World Bank, and between the UNDAF/CCA and the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) processes. The Director stated that cooperation with the World Bank was important for many reasons, including the fact that the Bank was a partner in the Administrative Committee on Cooperation/ Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions machinery and, therefore, an integral part of the development of UNDAFs and CCAs, poverty frameworks and conference follow-up. The Bank had been involved in most UNDAF/CCA processes to date. The CDF process was still evolving and existed currently in only a limited number of countries. There were four countries which had both UNDAF/CCA and CDF mechanisms, and in two, Mali and Viet Nam, UNICEF was looking at the relationship between the two. Whatever relationship might evolve, the secretariat emphasized that the Government would take the lead in both processes. With regard to the CCA, the World Bank had indicated that it would provide significant input in assessment of the country situation.

115. Country-level follow-up to conferences was undertaken with a view to ensuring consistency of approach among United Nations agencies, primarily through the Administrative Committee on Coordination machinery. Starting with the three inter-agency task forces, including one on Basic Social Services for All, the Committee developed detailed guidelines for coordination. Poverty eradication was the over-arching theme for conference follow-up. The UNDAF/CCA processes, under the leadership of Governments, took as one of its fundamental building blocks the follow-up to conferences.

116. The Director stated that capacity-building was a major priority for UNICEF and the entire United Nations system. Work done on the assessment, monitoring and evaluation of capacity-building was undertaken in a programmatic manner, drawing on UNICEF experiences and those of external partners, including bilateral development agencies. The process of developing a conceptual framework and appropriate monitoring and evaluation tools was leading to a clearer definition of the various interpretations of capacity-building and, thereby, to a sharper focus on

* Excerpt from the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2000. The complete report was issued as document E/2000/34 (Part I).

more effective programmes. The Director stated that capacity-building could not be done programme by programme or agency by agency. Therefore, UNICEF had joined with the United Nations system in developing a system-wide set of guidelines.

117. Regarding the training of peace-keepers on issues related to children's rights, UNICEF membership on the Executive Committee on Peace and Security provided the opportunity to advocate further and build on the work being done in collaboration with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations to develop training packages for peace-keepers.

118. A number of delegations expressed their concern over the low number UNICEF staff, and especially female staff, serving as resident coordinators. The Executive Director stated that this was a high priority for the organization. She reported that in addition to staff members serving as resident coordinators, UNICEF currently had staff seconded to East Timor, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNAIDS and the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships. Concerning the appointment of women, UNICEF was looking into ways to increase the numbers, either through fast-tracking of female staff members currently at the mid-management level or going outside the system to Governments and other institutions. In those cases, candidates would need to spend time in deputy posts to become familiar with the United Nations system and other organizations.

119. On the harmonization of procedures, UNICEF was working to go beyond the harmonization of budget formats and terminology, which had been completed a year ago. Working within the UNDG, three new areas were being examined: guidelines for joint MTRs; common formats for joint programmes; and the remuneration of project personnel. There was already standardization of a range of common services, starting with travel and conference servicing. The Director stated that there existed a database of experiences in 130 countries. Individuals from the funds and programmes were reviewing CCAs/UNDAFs in nine countries from a "lessons learned" perspective (sharing lessons and good practices, monitoring progress and application of guidelines, etc.). (See annex II, decision 2000/4, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)